
By: **Senators Frosh and Ruben**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2003

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper
4 Plumbing; specifying the membership and duties of the Task Force; providing
5 for the appointment of the chairman of the Task Force; providing for the staffing
6 of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving
7 compensation for serving on the Task Force; authorizing a member of the Task
8 Force to receive reimbursement for certain expenses; requiring a certain report
9 by a certain date; providing for the termination of the Task Force; and generally
10 relating to the Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing.

11 WHEREAS, More than 80% of domestic and commercial water pipes are made
12 of copper; and

13 WHEREAS, Pinhole leaks in copper water pipes can cause extensive, costly
14 damage to the buildings in which the pipes are located; and

15 WHEREAS, The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission has received five
16 thousand complaints from citizens in Montgomery and Prince George's counties about
17 pinhole leaks in copper water pipes; and

18 WHEREAS, The incidence of pinhole leaks is unusually high in certain
19 communities; and

20 WHEREAS, Claims for damages caused by pinhole leaks can contribute to
21 increased premiums or cancellation of homeowners' insurance policies; now, therefore,

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
23 MARYLAND, That:

24 (a) There is a Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing.

25 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

26 (1) the Chairman of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, or
27 the Chairman's designee;

1 (2) the Secretary of Housing and Community Development, or the
2 Secretary's designee;

3 (3) the Secretary of the Environment, or the Secretary's designee;

4 (4) the Commissioner of the Maryland Insurance Administration, or the
5 Commissioner's designee;

6 (5) two representatives designated by the Maryland Association of
7 Counties;

8 (6) one faculty member from the University System of Maryland with
9 expertise in the engineering and design of plumbing and piping, designated by the
10 Chancellor; and

11 (7) the following members appointed by the Governor:

12 (i) one representative of the copper plumbing industry;

13 (ii) one person with expertise in copper corrosion; and

14 (iii) two consumer representatives.

15 (c) The Governor shall designate the chairman of the Task Force.

16 (d) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall staff the
17 Task Force.

18 (e) A member of the Task Force:

19 (1) may not receive compensation; but

20 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
21 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

22 (f) The Task Force shall:

23 (1) investigate the possible causes of pinhole leaks in copper plumbing,
24 including water chemistry, water treatment practices, water additives, copper
25 plumbing design and installation practices, and copper plumbing cleaning and lining
26 practices;

27 (2) investigate the effect of pinhole leaks in copper plumbing on
28 homeowners' insurance coverage; and

29 (3) make recommendations regarding possible remedies for pinhole leaks
30 in copper plumbing.

31 (g) The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the
32 General Assembly on or before December 31, 2003.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
2 effect June 1, 2003. It shall remain effective for a period of 7 months and, at the end
3 of December 31, 2003, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this
4 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.